Getting the vaccine after having COVID-19

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I've already had COVID-19. Can I get it again?

Yes, it is possible to get COVID-19 again. Plus, the virus changes over time, and you may get sick with a different strain of COVID-19 that can possibly be more dangerous or contagious than before.

Should I get vaccinated even if I've already had COVID-19?

Yes. Vaccine immunity is stronger and longer lasting than immunity built from being infected with COVID-19.

What about natural immunity?

Your body does create some immunity after recovering from COVID-19. However, it is difficult to know how much and how long it lasts. Vaccines teach your body to build immunity that is long-lasting and good at recognizing and fighting COVID-19. Most people have strong protection just two weeks after they're vaccinated and are much less likely to be infected (or reinfected) or become severely ill with COVID-19 than people who are not vaccinated.
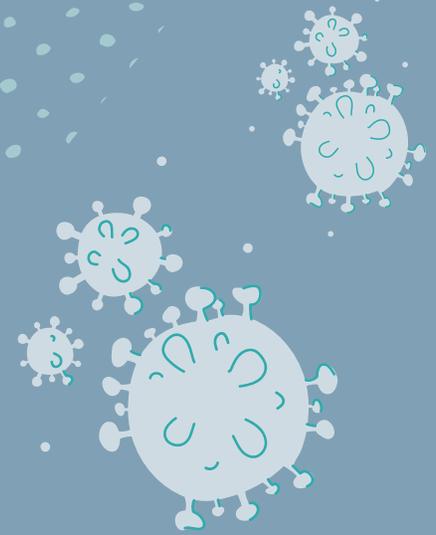
Why is getting vaccinated important?

Building immunity by getting vaccinated is much safer than getting infected with COVID-19. Sometimes, COVID-19 infection can require hospital care, or even lead to death. Even after you recover, some symptoms may persist for months (long COVID). Researchers are discovering possible permanent damage caused by COVID-19 infection.

Getting vaccinated adds an extra layer of protection against the virus—for you, and for high-risk family and loved ones, like grandparents and infants.